



March 10, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB1001 - State Designations - State Cocktail - Original Maryland Orange Crush

Chairman Pena-Melnyk,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC). I am writing to you today to express MTC's support to House Bill 1001. The Maryland Tourism Coalition is a trade organization with members representing all areas of tourism in the State of Maryland. Our mission is to support businesses and organizations that cater to the tourism industry through education, networking, and advocacy. We are writing to express our strong support for SB 562 to make the Original Maryland Orange Crush the official cocktail of Maryland.

This iconic beverage, which originated on the Eastern Shore, has become synonymous with our state's unique coastal culture and has the potential to serve as a valuable tool for boosting tourism and generating tax revenue.

Tourism is a vital component of Maryland's economy, and signature food and beverage experiences play a key role in attracting visitors. The Orange Crush is already a staple in waterfront bars and restaurants across the state, drawing countless visitors who seek an authentic Maryland experience. By officially recognizing this cocktail, Maryland can capitalize on its popularity and further promote it as a must-try regional specialty, encouraging both local and out-of-state tourism.

Additionally, the economic benefits of such a designation extend beyond tourism. The increased demand for Orange Crush cocktails would directly support local businesses, including distilleries, citrus suppliers, and hospitality establishments. With higher sales of the cocktail, the state would also see a natural boost in alcohol tax revenue, which can be reinvested into community programs, infrastructure, and economic development initiatives.

Other states have successfully leveraged their official cocktails to enhance their brand and attract visitors. Maryland has a unique opportunity to do the same by embracing a drink that already has deep roots in our state's culture and culinary identity.

I urge you to support this initiative and help solidify Orange Crush's status as an official symbol of Maryland pride and hospitality. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your leadership in making this a reality. We ask for a favorable report for this bill.



**MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION**

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Libber
Legislative Chair
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